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KHRUSHCHEV'S RISE IN PRESTIGE

There have been growing indications in the Soviet Union that N. S. Khrushchev's rising prestige may upset the current concept of collective leadership. During the past week Khrushchev has received a degree of personal publicity unprecedented since the inauguration of the collectivity principle just after Stalin's death.

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On May 19th, the Kazakh press and regional radio carried a full report of Khrushchev's inspection trip to Kazakhstan, and Pravda printed a speech by B. P. Beshchev, Minister of Rail transport, containing a twelve-line quotation from Khrushchev's speech to the February-March Central Committee plenum. In addition, Pravda printed a speech by Kaganovich which included references to the Supreme Soviet speeches of Khrushchev and Malenkov, but contrary to customary protocol, Khrushchev was mentioned first.

During his speech at the 22 May Ukrainian Supreme

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Soviet session commemorating the 300th anniversary of the reunification of the Ukraine with Russia, Kirichenko included Khrushchev--but not Malenkov-- in a brief list of "loyal disciples and comrades-in-arms of V. I. Lenin" who participated in the formation of the Soviet Ukraine. Later he gave a laudatory account of Khrushchev's work as first secretary of the Ukraine from 1938 to 1949. In addition, the delegates to the meeting from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan both went out of their way to laud Khrushchev, whose name was greeted by applause each time it was mentioned.

This tribute receives added significance in light of the fact that Malenkov's name is not mentioned once in any available account of the celebration. The increasing public prestige and actual influence of Khrushchev is contrary to the concept of collectivity and reflects adversely on Malenkov's status as head of party and state. While there is as yet no firm evidence of struggle, hints of policy differences

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between the two leaders do exist. It would be logical to expect some move by Malenkov in the near future to counter this trend. Its continuation could only suggest that Khrushchev's position and influence is greater than Malenkov's.

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